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Syria: Effects of War & Resettlement on Childhood and Education

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Syria: Effects of War & Resettlement on Childhood and Education

Cover Page Footnote

Abboud, S. N. (2016). Syria. Cambridge: Polity Press. Alayan, S., Rohde, A., & Dhouib, S. (Eds.). (2012). Curricula, The Politics of Education Reform in the Middle East: Self and Other in Textbooks and. New York : Berghahn Books. Children's Living Nightmares. (2017). (Save the Children Foundation Inc.) Retrieved from Save the Children. Fazel, M., Reed, R. V., Panter-Brick, C., & Stein, A. (Jan 2012). Mental health of displaced and refugee children resettled in high-income countries: risk and protective factors. *The Lancet*, 379(9812), 266-282. Immerstein, S., & Al-Shaikhly, S. (2016, April 4). Education in Syria. Retrieved March 2017, from World Education News and Reviews: <http://wenr.wes.org/2016/04/education-in-syria> Labi, A. (2014, November 7). Scholars in Danger Join World's Refugees. *Chronicles of Higher Education*, 19. Ladika, S. (2017, March/April). Empowering Refugees Through Education. *International Educator*, 26(2), 32-39. Mansel, P. (2016). Aleppo: The Rise and Fall of Syria's Great Merchant City. London: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd. Mettelsiefen, M. (Director). (2016). *Frontline: Children of Syria* [Motion Picture]. Ritzer, G., & Dean, P. (2015). *Gloalization: A Basic Text*. (B. P. Ltd, Ed.) West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons Ltd. Sinclair, M. (2011). Education in emergencies. Learning for a future: Refugee education in developing countries, 1-84. Timm, M. (2016). The Integration of Refugees into the German Education System: A Stance for Cultural Pluralism and Multicultural Education. *JEP: EJournal of Education Policy*, 1-7.

Abstract

This paper addresses the negative impacts that the current crisis in Syria has on childhood and education. The research conducted for this paper is a compilation of scholarly articles, books, reports, and films; the diversity allows for a multiplicity of perspectives on the topic. A thorough background is provided as the groundwork to understand the shift from development to retrogression in Syria. An analysis of the diversity of effects include: educational, social, psychological, emotional, and personal. Research includes the interventions, conducted by both international and national actors, of schooling and social integration within and outside of the Syrian borders. In thoroughly analyzing the way violence influences the accessibility and quality of schooling that a child receives, as well as the way resettlement and integration impact a child, conclusions are drawn that the current interventions do not suffice.

Introduction

Throughout this paper, the history of Syria and its education system, as well as the contemporary state it is in will be thoroughly analyzed. Syria's education system has faced much reform and crises over the past seventy years, including but not limited to: reforms in curriculum, consolidation, war, and destruction. The impacts of the reforms and crises have clearly inhibited the overall schooling system from developing fully. Additionally, much of the system has been halted given the state of Syria within the past decade. Because of the instability that has festered within the borders and in the international community, the Syrian people as a whole have suffered greatly. However, no one has suffered more than the children who have had their innocence and safety ripped away from them. It is with this that their education or chances for schooling have minimalized tremendously. The little schooling that is available to the children of Syria is at a high risk and low quality, thus increasing their chances of becoming a "lost generation." However, the schooling that has taken form during the crisis is not readily available to all children. Therefore, over 50% of the child population is not receiving any sort of education (Children's Living Nightmares, 2017). Without proper and quality schooling, any chance of creating a sense of normalcy is nonexistent. The resettlement process has also influenced the children in having to (re)integrate into society (whether near or far), while also experiencing the social, psychological, and emotional tolls that this crisis has imposed on them. Fortunately, there are several different interventions underway, mostly run by relief groups, umbrella organizations, volunteers, school systems in the new countries, etc. However, more interventions will come into play when this war ends and the country needs to be rebuilt from the bottom up.

Key Terms:

In order to familiarize one's self with the topic of discussion, an understanding of terms is needed.

- Asylum seekers: refugees who seek to remain in the country to which they flee
- IDP: internally displaced persons; individuals forced to leave certain parts of their country and who are now displaced within their own borders
- Refugee: those who are forced to leave their homeland, or who leave involuntarily, because they fear for their safety
- Childhood: a stage of development often characterized by play and school; a period of time where children are still "innocent;" a stage that can be redefined by circumstances, such as war and violence
- Ba'ath: the ruling political party in Syria
- Bashar al-Assad: son of Hafez, former Ba'athist president of Syria; disliked, especially during the Arab Spring
- Militarization: began in response to the regime's brutal response to protests, resulting in the increased violence present today
- Political Islam(ists): adherents of political Islam which states that politics and Islam are fundamentally inseparable; belief that a Muslim government is the only way to rule
- al-Queda: Islamist militant group; cellular, terrorist organization that focuses on local/national conflicts to the degree that they are manifestations of a global struggle
- ISIS: organized by al-Queda; Islamic State in Iraq and Syria
- Free Syrian Army: FSA; composed of defectors from the regime's army; in opposition of the regime
- Aleppo: city in Northern Syria that has become the center of conflict

- Refugee Camps: camps in receiving countries where refugees can settle along the road to obtaining legal status or settling in future homes; services such as medical aid and schooling are offered and organized typically by INGOs and local NGOs
- Resettlement: the process by which refugees have sought asylum and are being placed in a different country
- (Re) integration: the social process by which refugees transition/assimilate into the receiving country and into “normalcy”
- Lost generation: the younger generation of Syrians who are maturing during the heightened conflict and who bear the greatest burden of the conflict
- Social quietism: opposite of political Islam; belief in a separation of state and Islam

(Abboud, 2016) and (Ritzer & Dean, 2015)

Thesis

In this paper, I will be discussing the effects that the current conflict and resettlement have had on children in Syria.

Research Question

How does the legal status of an individual affect their access to education and childhood, specifically when they are within (or from) an area of conflict?

Roadmap

In order to better understand the content of this paper, a provided roadmap will introduce the headings or sections this paper will ensue.

A detailed background section will describe the history of Syria as a nation, as well as the history of its education system; this would include topics like Syria’s rise to independence in the Post-Mandate period, the emergence of the Ba’ath Party, curriculum reforms/new

curriculum added, testing, regulations on private schools, etc. A shift into an overview of the rise of the Syrian Spring will also be given, as it will provide substantial information in understanding the events that are currently taking place. This will include a detailed background on the emergence of the war, resettlement process, the revolution, and what is left of Syria.

A literature review and methodology section will then view the resources used during this project and how they have pieced together. A section titled Findings will include an analysis of the research done and how it answers the research question above.

A discussion section will tie everything together in that it will critically connect the effects of the war and resettlement on the future development during and after the war. This will include a heading looking at the past and current interventions, as well as where there is room for improvement. Additionally, it will call to mind any interventions that will hypothetically be needed when the war is over.

Background

Syria's History of a Nation and Education System

Although the history of Syria dates back to roughly the 16th century, the necessary background of the history in relation to this paper begins in the 20th century. It takes place generally around the time of both world wars, which Syria managed to avoid. The Post-Mandate Period is characterized by mass mobilization and nationalism and lasted from 1944-1963. In January of 1944, Syria gained independence from the twenty year ruling of the French Mandate. However, the French troops who were occupying Syria at the time did not leave until April of 1946. (Mansel, 2016).

Following the departure of the French, came Syria's Golden Years. The 1950s were filled with reforms and the flourishing of the elite class; Aleppo became a center for

tourism as it attracted businesspeople and their partners alike. The city was characterized by the increasing wealth and status of those who visited. (Mansel, 2016). As a parallel, Syria was dominated by the landlord-merchant class in the political sphere (Abboud, 2016). The Glorious Years of Syria also included reforms driven by nationalism. The reforms in the 1950s were within the education system, specifically geared towards a “nationalization” of education, a spirit started because of the Post Mandate Period. In 1957, the Syrian government began taking control of the private schools, whereas they could no longer appoint their administrators or teachers or determine their tuition costs. The government moved towards consolidating the private sector into the public school sector, arguing that the private schools needed to start bearing the costs of education. Following the increased control came the resignation of many of the original administrators and staff within the private school sector, resulting in the government’s rise of control and a decrease in diversity of the education system. Evidently the rise of control for the government, as well as the rise of the economy were beneficial or “glorious” for Syria, but these years came to an end and marked the emergence of a new Syria. (Alayan, Rohde, & Dhouib, 2012).

Ba’ath Emergence

In 1963, the Ba’ath Party emerged following a “bloodless coup” (Abboud, 2016). This point in time is characterized by revolution, regime preservation, socialism, consolidation, and social mobilization. The new Ba’ath Party was made up of rural and minoritarian officers. In the first few years of the regime, a policy of radical social transformation was a goal. (Abboud, 2016). Moving forward in the regime, the emergence of the Assads took place. The ruling of the Assads is characterized by the authoritarianism of the regime. All institutions were controlled and there were little to no political freedoms, especially for the socially disadvantaged. The regime was run as a dynastic dictatorship, beginning with President Hafez al-Assad. The introduction to social welfare was made; however, it was only

for the exchange of social quietism. This exemplifies the way in which the regime was looking to control every sector of society in order to strengthen its connection to the state. (Mansel, 2016).

Education Reforms

In 1975, curriculum modifications began within the Ministry of Education in Syria. However, they did not fully take form until the 90s when an amending of each grade curriculum (within primary & secondary education) began. The amending process consisted of changing the curriculum at an average of one grade per year for grades 1-12. (Alayan, Rohde, & Dhouib, 2012).

In order to better understand the division of the education system within Syria, the outline goes as follows:

General Outline: Education in Syria	
Basic Education (9 years)	
First Cycle	4 years
Second Cycle	5 years
Secondary Education	3 years
Post-Secondary Education	1-6 years

World Education Services, 2016
SYRIA: Educational Profile, wenr.wes.org



In 1981, education became compulsory for ages six to twelve. An example of a curriculum amendment is in 1997 when information sciences and an increase in foreign language were introduced. (Alayan, Rohde, & Dhouib, 2012).

In 2000, Bashar al-Assad assumed power. His assumption to power was followed by a multitude of economic reforms motivated by neoliberalism in the attempt to create a social market economy. The premise of this type of economy is “to achieve social welfare through increasingly privatized and marketized mechanisms... [and] to rebalance public/private sector

authority to encourage private business interests to play a larger role in the economy” (Abboud, 2016).

Reforms in 2001 consisted of extending the amendment of compulsory education from ages six to twelve to ages six to sixteen. Another regulation was implemented where students finishing their basic education would have to take an exam where upon passing, they would obtain a certificate (Immerstein & Al-Shaikhly, 2016). The results of the exam and the certificate help students in determining whether they should continue their education at a general secondary school or a vocational secondary school (Alayan, Rohde, & Dhouib, 2012).

Later in 2004, more regulations are imposed on the private schools. The Syrian government required all private schools to use the same textbooks that were used within the public school sector as a way of ensuring that the private schools did not develop at a faster rate than the public (Alayan, Rohde, & Dhouib, 2012). This regulation limited the private schools’ overall development and serves as an example of the increasing governmental control over all institutions. This regulation explains why only 3% of all primary schools in Syria are private and why only 6% of all secondary schools are private (Immerstein & Al-Shaikhly, 2016). Consolidating the private school sector, increasing control in institutions, and promoting a more sectarian society in Syria are all factors that contributed to the uproar in 2011.

Syrian Spring

The increased tensions could no longer be suppressed and 2011 is when this conflict-ridden Syria began. Interestingly enough, there is not one single factor that caused the uproar; however, it is an array and buildup of several different grievances. Economic dislocation, the spread of the Arab spring, historical suppression of political opposition, inflation, and a

culture of fear are all factors that increased tensions and political disgust for the state of Syria. (Abboud, 2016).

In February of 2011, the protests in Syria began in Dar'a after the arrests and detention of fifteen middle school-aged boys spray painted, "the people want to the downfall of the regime" on their school building. The reason the boys were detained is because this is the slogan for the Arab protests and served as a symbol of political opposition. Therefore, the regime found that in order to continue this political suppression, the boys needed to be detained. Soon after, Syrians took to the streets where the beginning of political opposition took form. The momentum of the movement continued and by mid-March, protests consumed much of Syria. (Abboud, 2016).

Division of Protesting Groups

Initially, the movement was rather disorganized and disconnected. Protestors came from several different social and political backgrounds making it difficult for all of them to come together. There are five distinct groups who were present in the first protests and mobilized effectively into a strong network. Members from the secular, educated, and urban middle classes were heavily involved in the media and publicizing the protests. Kinship based networks or tribes were usually socioeconomically disadvantaged. These members were motivated because of their social exclusion from the Ba'ath Party; however, their strategy was unclear. Some tribes joined the regime, while others joined the opposition. Another group was made of political Islamists who were divided into several groups like ISIS, al-Nusra, and the Muslim Brotherhood. Additionally, the Free Syrian Army that formed is a more localized version of this group of protestors in that it consisted mainly of the local defectors of the regime's army. A group of political and social activists also rose in opposition of the regime. Lastly, a group of the unemployed, marginalized, and urban

subalterns protested. This group shared the socioeconomic and political grievances as other protestors, specifically because their disadvantages led them to experiencing the worst grievances first-hand. (Abboud, 2016).

Collaboration

Despite the vast differences between all these groups, organization and collaboration ensued after protest groups realized their central demands. Demands included: a regime change, a new security apparatus, the resignation of al-Assad, an independent judiciary, and a new constitution. In having central demands, the protests became stronger, leaving the regime feeling threatened. As a result, the regime responded with repression. Their brutality led to the detainment and killing of protesters which in turn sparked the militarization of the movement. This trajectory led to the retreat of the Assad forces which left Syria in the hands of rebel groups, gangs, and tribes. This fall of Syria provided an opportunity for the politically Islamist group, al-Qaeda, to take control. Groups like an-Nusra and ISIS were brought in to join forces with the political Islamists of Syria who had been suppressed for so long. The entry of these extremist and militarized groups contributed to the escalation of violence that has led Syria to its current situation. (Abboud, 2016).

Literature Review

In Abboud's book, *Syria*, a contemporary analysis of Syria's current state is performed. Abboud begins by giving a historical overview of Syria's post-Mandate state up until the Baathist coup in 1963. This overview offers substantial background information in order to fully understand the uprising and mobilization. After this background, Abboud discusses the uprising, as well as its shift into armed conflict by different actors. A section of the book covers the approaches and interventions in play by the international community. In

contrast, the book ends discussing its failure as well as how the conflict is affecting Syria as a whole and redefining it as a nation. (Abboud, 2016).

In Mansel's book on Aleppo, a detailed history of Syria's merchant city is given, dating back to the Ottoman Empire. However, Mansel also focus on Syria's gain of independence, the Assad regime, and the death of Aleppo. This source has explained both the development and retrogression of the country's center hold. (Mansel, 2016).

Alayan et. al's work on education in the Middle East introduces the education reforms that took place within Syria from 1957 to the mid-2000s. A description on curriculum reforms, as well as governmental action in limiting the private school sector is given. (Alayan, Rohde, & Dhouib, 2012).

The scholarly articles and journals within the research all cover the different impacts the war and resettlement have had on children. While some cover impacts it has had on mental health as well as access to (quality) education, others focus more on interventions that are currently in place (both in receiving countries and parts of Syria that are not overrun with conflict). Additionally, the digital sources were all published in different years, therefore, the change of approach and content are evident.

Methodology

Research for this project began in early March and was inspired after attending an event on campus. This event showed a Frontline movie titled "Children of Syria" and had an open discussion and opportunity to write letters to local legislation regarding the crisis in Syria. Following the event, I returned home where I began my research.

Many of the materials found were through Loyola Libraries; most were scholarly articles that could be obtained digitally. Additionally, books were found within different sections of both the Cudahy and Corboy libraries. Most of the books within the Cudahy

library were based on the history of Syria, whereas the sources in Corboy were specifically geared towards education in Syria.

Tracy Ruppman assisted me in using the Education Research Complete Database through Loyola. Here I was able to come across a few scholarly sources like Peer Reviewed Journals and published papers.

Not only have I used the resources available at Loyola, but I have also come across a number of different news articles, as well as education evaluations and reports. These resources were obtained by using Google Scholar.

After collecting these resources, I began to analyze it all and categorize it by “history,” “education,” and “interventions.” Within these categories, I have formed subcategories including: nation’s history, educational history, education reform and systems, current events, interventions within educating children, resettling families, and reintegrating individuals.

Findings

My research was prompted by how the status of an individual affects their childhood and education. Given the sources I’ve come across, my findings have included multiple perspectives on the topic. While some sources contain focused case studies within a given part of Syria following a specific group, other resources have simply analyzed quantitative data.

Because my research on the Syrian crisis is current, the quantitative data is constantly changing. However, it has been interesting to see how the numbers have changed progressively since 2011. For example, the number of displaced children and children not attending school is a number that will never be exact. Firstly, this is because there is no

efficient or accurate way of obtaining exact numbers because the flow of people is constantly changing. Additionally, there is no way of keeping track of so many individuals.

The correlation of legal status and opportunity has come up in each resource. Whether a student is leaving the Syrian borders, or is travelling south in the country, their status as a refugee or IDP hinders their opportunity and access to education and a meaningful childhood. The status alone can put legal limitations on the individual in that they must be accepted into the country of resettlement. However, it can also limit a student in that the student is living in fear constantly. This fear is what causes families and children to be reluctant in enrolling in a new school; they are fearful of needing to leave again or being targeted.

Lastly, a finding that is rather compelling is the motivation Syrian children have to obtaining education. The desire is engrained in the idea that education now can be used to rebuild the nation when the war is over. Whether the education is obtained within Syrian borders, in neighboring countries in the West, the hope is to use that education as a building block in developing a new Syria. The fall of Syria as a nation will not be in vain if education is used as a tool of empowering refugees and IDPs. (Ladika, 2017).

Discussion

When the conflict first began, many schools were still running and safely accessible. However, due to the uprising in violence, damage to buildings, and increased displacement of students and teachers, the educational crisis became dire and looks much like what is seen today. Specifically, the infrastructural damage of school buildings has left the students who are still within borders with nowhere to go. A study performed in 2014 by the Syrian Center for Policy Research concluded that 25% of all schools stopped functioning, 600 were converted into IDP shelters, and 4,600 were completely destroyed. By the following year, an estimate of half of all school-aged children were no longer attending, which makes for

approximately 3 million students. (Abboud, 2016). This number does not include refugee children, but it does serve as an example of how Syria is at risk of losing an entire generation.

Fragmentation and Deprivation

The lost generation is a term coined, as the experience of the Syrian conflict is generational; it is impacting the younger generations the most, those out of and in the country. The conflict's impact on education deprivation (within the country) mirrors the fragmentation of the country. The North is experiencing heavy levels of violence in cities like Aleppo and Raqqa, while the South contains areas that are regime controlled like Damascus and Homs. Therefore, the areas that are under regime control are less likely to have such heightened levels of violence, which allows for safer environments and accessibility to education. Attendance rates in the North are estimated to be at 26-36%, while attendance rates in the South have increased. IDPs are drawn to the South to seek refuge, as these areas are less violent and access to services is much greater. The attendance rates demonstrate a strong correlation between the intensity of fighting and access to education. However, the rates also bring about another issue. While attendance rates are increasing in the South, the quality of education is decreasing. Greater densities of population decrease the quality of social services that are available. And while IDPs are drawn to safer areas in the South, families are less likely to enroll their children in schools in fear that they will have to leave and find refuge elsewhere. (Abboud, 2016). Additionally, parents have had influence in that they are less likely to send their children to school in areas that are more surrounded by conflict because "[students] are now specifically being attacked and centers of learning have gone from being incidental victims to battlegrounds," believing that streets are safer than schools (Labi, 2014). The deprivation of schooling that students face puts them far behind, making it difficult to find motivation to return to school when the opportunities comes, thus increasing the lost generation.

Effects on the Psyche

Not only has the war effected standard education, but it has also influenced personal childhoods. Children who live in war-torn areas of Syria, or experienced it prior to their road to resettlement, have sustained social, psychological, and emotional effects that are lasting. Cases of PTSD, depression, anxiety, and sleep disturbances have all resulted. Additionally, children are forced to mature at an accelerated rate while living amongst so much destruction and change. The accelerated maturation tears a child's innocence away, as they do not live in safe zones where playing and attending school are possible. Rather, children are living in a fear that is present and obtrusive. Studies in camps have gathered groups of children, asking how the crisis has been affecting them. The question was posed of if the children had ever experienced feelings of depression or thoughts of suicide to escape the atrocities that surround them. The results of this study showed that increasing amounts of children had indeed contemplated these actions. They also demonstrated a strong correlation between exposure to violence and trauma and symptoms of depression and PTSD. (Fazel, Reed, Panter-Brick, & Stein, Jan 2012).

Case Study: Children at risk

Another place where parents are held accountable for the effects the war has on their children is in the cases of families who are supporting and fighting in the revolution. In a case study done in Aleppo, a family of four (two parents, two young children) remained in Syria because the father was fighting in the revolution, serving as an engineer and soldier. With the intention of not splitting up, the family remained in Aleppo, while the father fought. This left the children with no schooling and at extreme risk, as they lived in a neighborhood that was mostly destroyed and constantly under attack. Oftentimes, the children would go out, carrying automatic weapons, scavenging for necessities in abandoned homes. Hearing

explosions as they walked through the streets, they could identify what the explosion came from. Additionally, the children also would help their father in making explosives from time to time. Given the circumstances of the conflict, the role of a parent is filled with harder decisions and actions that impact childhoods all the more. These facts and images are appalling and disturbing. Images of children, whose innocence is diminishing, walking through ruined roads, carrying weapons, rather than books, with minds filled with fear, rather than knowledge. This is the epitome of the lost generation. In this case study, the mother eventually resettled abroad with her children; however, this process of resettlement and integration was seemingly harder, given the uniquely horrid experiences of the children. (Mettelsiefen, 2016).

Issues of Resettlement

Children who are experiencing resettlement in other countries are facing issues in the process of integration. After witnessing and experiencing great amounts of human suffering, children and families are placed in communities where violence is not at the forefront. Therefore, children have to struggle with being reintegrated back into a normal society and everyday life where school and play are the focus, rather than survival. Children are faced with reconstructing their identity and finding what the rest of their childhood can entail.

Interventions

Schooling

As noted in the forgoing, education is being received both in and out of the country. The interventions within Syria have taken creative forms. While low conflict areas are able to openly provide schooling for children, the areas drowning in conflict are pushed to taking a different approach. Several makeshift schools have been formed, given that many buildings have been destroyed. Amidst the destruction and chaos, teachers and volunteers alike have

formed schools in underground caves, tents, trailers, and buildings that still stand. The structure of classrooms has changed significantly because of the conflict, which has affected the way a child views schooling. The traditional classroom with desks, books, and a board in the front has transformed into children gathered on dirt floors, sharing textbooks, in the dark as a teacher attempts to give a lesson. Additionally, an association has been made with the fear of educating one's self. Children and teachers are at risk of this common practice of schooling; they educate and learn in fear that death is lurking around the corner. Nonetheless, these makeshift schools have served students well, as they create and bring forth a sense of normalcy for children whose lives are filled with much fear. Because these schools are led by former teachers, as well as activists who have been present since the beginning of the conflict; this shared history provides a sense of unity amongst the people. In receiving schooling, a glimmer of hope remains and childhoods are preserved. (Sinclair, 2011).

The preservation of normalcy and childhood through education is not only within Syrian borders. Refugee camps in neighboring countries have also introduced schooling for children. In 2013, Jordan absorbed half a million refugees, while Lebanon absorbed 800,000. However, 80% of Syrian children in Lebanon were not enrolled in schools, while 56% of Syrian children in Jordan were not enrolled. Typically the schooling in refugee camps is organized and conducted by volunteers from NGOs, INGOs, and local volunteers within the camp or region. Although not all volunteers are fully trained or prepared for teaching children, the effort and schooling is still present. Moreover, it is a case of having something being better than having nothing. (Sinclair, 2011).

Reintegration Programs

In cases of resettlement, children are in need to be (re)integrated into society. Consequently, schools abroad have helped in forming coop programs to help children and

families with the integration process and to decrease the social, linguistic, and cultural gaps experienced upon arrival. The programs cover language learning, communal development, multicultural inclusivity, and therapy; it is brought together and formed by educators, administrators, social workers, and therapists in order to create a well-fostered and safe environment for the new students (Timm, 2016). Such interventions are more likely to produce stable resettlement and to create social support networks that positively impact a child's psychological functioning (Sinclair, 2011). In Germany, this intervention leads schools "to support a learning process that promotes emotional maturity of students" (Timm, 2016).

Programs focused on the care of students regard them as people first. This approach keeps in mind that students, or children rather, need their minds to be cared for first, given the multitude of negative experiences they had prior to their resettlement process. "Because emotional and psychological instability may affect the cognitive development increasing their academic challenges, emotional and psychological well-being is a basic condition for meaningful engagement in learning" (Timm, 2016). Therefore, the programs in Germany are succeeding in that they are fostering to the well-being of their students in order to ensure proper cognitive development to create long-term positive growth.

Conclusion

Given the current crisis in Syria and the multitude of effects it has had on children, interventions within education can be and are used as tools to keep a sense of normalcy amidst circumstances that are seemingly heinous. The Syrian nation's risk of losing an entire generation to war has provoked a dire educational crisis, while also eliciting an imperative need for the interventions in place such as: makeshift schools, schooling in refugee camps, and integration programs in receiving countries. These programs and interventions are to act

as a barrier to the ignorance, despair, radicalization, and exploitation that Syrian children are susceptible to because of the war. The findings made regarding the current interventions have proven to be both pleasantly surprising, as well as disappointing, as there are several gaps and flaws. Current interventions have shown determined efforts in ensuring education for children, as well as in creating safe environments that ease the resettlement process. However, a greater call to action and improvements can be made in order to fully ensure successful interventions that guarantee a better future for the Syrian people and the country itself.

Agenda for Future Research

As stated in the forgoing, gaps and shortcomings are present within current interventions. It is with these shortcomings that future research would address the different approaches that future interventions could take, as well as the future interventions that will be needed once the war is over. To begin, there is clearly a low sense of urgency in implementing education efficiently within refugee camps. Much of the schooling that is organized is rather delayed, and the training for teachers and volunteers is rather minimal (Sinclair, 2011). Therefore, there is a call for greater urgency/efficiency and quality of education for the schooling implemented in refugee camps. Assuming that when this future research is conducted, current interventions will have elevated to answer this call.

Room for improvement can be found in the need or cultural pluralism within integration programs. Although minute forms of it exist in Germany, a stronger bridge needs to be built that combines both native (Syrian) culture with host culture in order to create a deeper sense of belonging. Future findings might include this type of programming, considering the implementation of it thus far is slowly developing. (Timm, 2016).

Another flaw can be found in the current psychological interventions. Although in the case study of Germany, integration programs addressing the psyche are in place, the priority needs to be much higher and present in other places. An approach to be seen in future research would include the implementation of psychological interventions and programming prior to and alongside schooling. Adaptive systems that intersect the social, emotional, personal, and psychological aspects are needed so that individuals can cultivate their childhoods and educations. Without the proper implementation and care for a child's psyche, cognitive and academic development will be limited, as the child experiences PTSD, depression, and anxiety, limiting the child's focus and drive for pursuing and succeeding in academia. A desirable perspective in future research would be a person-first approach in interventions.

Lastly, another path for future research would include how education is being used as a tool or empowerment. As noted in the findings, education can be used as a way to rebuild the country of Syria, long after the war is over. The country will have been left with very little standing. Therefore, the country as a whole will need to be rebuilt structurally, politically, economically, and socially from the bottom-up. The demand for reconstruction will need a diversity of skilled and educated workers and professionals alike, hence the need for education now. The lost generation will need to be found with education in order to become the founders of a new Syria, one united by a shared history with a common goal of renewal.

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